



# THE CARLOS V PRICE TO MAMMA ERASMUS, SOFIA CORRADI

*By GoEurope Posted 05/13/2016 In Europe*

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The story of one of the most important student exchange programmes in Europe, started in 1958 when Sofia Corradi, only 20 years old and just back from doing a Masters Degree at the University of Columbia (New York, USA), was insulted by a professor at the University La Sapienza. He said to her: “You cannot travel all around the world and then pretend to steal a degree here!”. This professor had not even heard of the University of Columbia and he thought that she was trying to make a fool of him. She had to spend another year studying in Rome in order to complete her Masters, because the Roman University did not recognise any of the exams that students sat abroad. Fortunately she was able to do this, because her family were in a good economic situation. However this made her think about all the other students that might have found themselves in the same situation as her, but without financial support, and she felt it was unfair that so many wouldn't be able to have this opportunity.

After this happened, she felt strongly that others shouldn't have to go through what she had, and so she started developing the idea of a European project which allows students to have the opportunity to study abroad whilst also for their exams to become recognised internationally.

Sofia presented her project to every professor, politician and parliamentarian she had the chance to meet, she sent documents to rectors in 1969 and finally her project started to be appreciated as a worthwhile opportunity, therefore it was presented in the European Chancellors Reunion.

In 1976 for the first time, degrees achieved by Italians in France were equally recognised in their

mother country, and in 1987 finally the Erasmus programme started to take off.

Nowadays more than 4 million students have already experienced this incredible exchange programme, and Sofia's dream is to enlarge the programme internationally into every country in the world.

Earlier this week, Sofia was awarded the Carlos V prize in the Royal Monastery of Yuste, (Extremadura, Spain) as a recognition towards her hard work, and how she made this dream become reality.

Every time she meets students they thank her, saying how much the Erasmus programme has changed their life.

Erasmus is not only studying abroad, is about discovering new cultures, sharing experiences with friends which you wouldn't ever meet if you were to stay in your own country.

“When someone turns 18 or 20 what he wants is to fly away from the nest. Erasmus is what can help our young students in carrying out their dream”.

Tags: Sofia Corradi, Student Exchange Programme



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